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Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections: election of fourteen members of the Human Rights Council

Note verbale dated 2 February 2007 from the Permanent Mission of Denmark to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

The Permanent Mission of Denmark to the United Nations presents its compliments to the President of the sixty-first session of the General Assembly and has the honour to announce that the Government of Denmark has decided to present its candidature to the Human Rights Council for the period 2007-2010 at the elections to be held in May 2007.

In accordance with General Assembly resolution 60/251, the Permanent Mission of Denmark to the United Nations has the honour to enclose herewith an aide-memoire on Denmark's voluntary pledges and commitments.

Denmark remains committed to ensuring that the Human Rights Council continues to develop into a credible, effective and operative body for the promotion and protection of human rights.

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Annex to the note verbale dated 2 February 2007 from the Permanent Mission of Denmark to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

Candidacy of Denmark to the Human Rights Council at the elections in 2007

Voluntary pledges and commitments in accordance with resolution 60/251

Denmark is strongly committed to the universal promotion and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and considers civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development, universal, indivisible, interrelated, interdependent and mutually reinforcing.

Denmark is a firm supporter of the United Nations, including the Human Rights Council, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner on Human Rights, the treaty bodies, the Special Procedures and other human rights-related United Nations bodies. Denmark has also contributed extensively to United Nations bodies with a role in the promotion of the rule of law, including as Chair of the Counter-Terrorism Committee in 2005/2006.

Denmark has been actively engaged in United Nations reform, including the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission as well as the Human Rights Council. Denmark is highly committed to making the Council credible, effective and operative and believes that this objective should be reached, inter alia, by building on the achievements of the Commission on Human Rights.

For years, Denmark has been one of the largest voluntary donors to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights through unearmarked contributions to the general budget and other contributions to voluntary funds under the Office.

Denmark is a State party to the core international human rights instruments and their optional protocols. Denmark accepts individual and inter-State complaints and has a strong tradition of full cooperation with all United Nations bodies, including the treaty bodies and the Special Procedures.

Denmark works continuously to intensify its international action to promote human rights and fundamental freedoms, inter alia, through the reinforcement of its commitment to the United Nations as well as the allocation of more funds for human rights-related activities as part of Danish development assistance.

Denmark remains one of the world's largest bilateral donors in terms of development assistance per capita, and its overall development assistance will continue to amount to at least 0.8 per cent of gross national product (GNP) annually and will rise as GNP increases. The total amount of Danish development assistance is at present more than 2 billion dollars. In that context, Denmark also provides significant voluntary contributions to United Nations funds, programmes and agencies.

The primary focus of Denmark's development policy is to contribute actively to the fulfilment of the Millennium Development Goals. Denmark considers respect

for human rights, democratization and good governance as keys to development. Human rights are therefore not only a cross-cutting issue, but also an individual priority area for Danish development assistance.

As a member of the Council, Denmark pledges:

To work actively to ensure that the Council becomes credible, effective and operative

- By engaging in a constructive, genuine and transparent dialogue in the Council with all States as well as with civil society
- By working to ensure that the Council functions as an effective framework to counter human rights violations and crises as well as for technical assistance
- By working to ensure that the Council addresses all human rights issues: civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development
- By contributing constructively to an effective universal periodic review, which encompasses scrutiny as well as needs for capacity-building
- By submitting itself fully to a universal periodic review
- By cooperating constructively with future mandates and mechanisms to be determined as a result of the current review

To firmly support human rights-related activities of the United Nations

- By encouraging Governments worldwide to become States parties to the United Nations human rights instruments and to comply with their reporting obligations as well as with recommendations by treaty bodies
- By providing financial and institutional support to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights through unearmarked contributions to the general budget and other contributions to voluntary funds under the Office, and by providing financial support to other United Nations bodies with a role in human rights protection
- By contributing constructively to restructuring the treaty bodies
- By cooperating fully and in a timely manner with all treaty bodies and Special Procedures
- By working to ensure that the United Nations functions as a framework for technical assistance to Member States in order to support the fulfilment of their international human rights obligations

To advance human rights internationally

- By working to strengthen the implementation of international human rights instruments, including the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- By contributing substantially to the fight against poverty, including through Danish development assistance
- By firmly promoting the rule of law as well as the fight against impunity

- By promoting greater tolerance and addressing issues related to combating all forms of discrimination based on religion or belief and incitement to religious hatred, through a constructive and genuine dialogue rooted in mutual respect, equal rights and understanding
- By working for a swift entry into force of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance
- By working to promote gender mainstreaming within the framework of the United Nations

To intensify efforts to combat and eradicate torture everywhere, inter alia

- By taking initiatives to structure and intensify the Council's action against torture and by considering the restructuring of the General Assembly's action against torture
- By supporting independent international monitoring of freedom from torture
- By soliciting adherence to the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and supporting its implementation
- By developing a Danish framework for bilateral cooperation against torture

To ensure effective enjoyment of human rights domestically

- By continuing to strive for the highest standards in the protection and promotion of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for everyone in Denmark without distinction of any kind as to race, colour, sex, language or religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status
- By maintaining a genuine and open dialogue with civil society on human rights protection in Denmark
- By submitting fully to independent monitoring of human rights protection domestically through cooperation with international and national monitoring bodies as well as by complying with their recommendations.